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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters

Progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluations of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution A/C.3/61/L.60 and Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/9. The report assesses the extent to which attention to the girl child has been mainstreamed in policies and programmes at the national level, including through analyses of responses submitted by Member States in preparation for the 10-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly, as well as the updates received in response to a note verbale. The report also analyses poverty reduction strategy papers and national Millennium Development Goals reports, as well as reports on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The report concludes with recommendations for consideration by the Commission on the Status of Women.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 61/145, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to report annually to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women, on the follow-up to and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly, with an assessment of progress in gender mainstreaming, including information on key achievements, lessons learned and good practices, and recommendations on further measures to enhance implementation.

2. In its resolution 2006/9, the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission, on an annual basis, a report on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on the priority theme (para. 18).[1] The thematic issue before the fifty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women is the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child.

3. In Beijing the Platform for Action (A/CONF.177/20), Governments, in addressing issues concerning children and youth, were called on to promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes, so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on girls and boys, respectively (para. 273).

4. The present report, submitted in response to those mandates, assesses the extent to which attention to the girl child has been mainstreamed in policies and programmes at the national level, through an analysis of responses submitted by Member States in preparation for the 10-year review and appraisal of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (see also General Assembly resolution S-23/3), as well as updates received in response to a note verbale sent to Member States on 20 June 2006. The report also analyses poverty reduction strategy papers and national Millennium Development Goals reports, as well as reports on the implementation of international treaty obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The report concludes with recommendations for the consideration by the Commission on the Status of Women.

5. The present report does not attempt to provide a comprehensive account of efforts to mainstream attention to eliminating discrimination and violence against the girl child at the national level, but provides an assessment of trends in mainstreaming as reported by Member States. The findings are dependent on the extent to which the girl child was given attention in the reporting mechanisms assessed. The present report should be read in conjunction with the report of the Secretary-General on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child (E/CN.6/2007/2).

6. In preparation for the 10-year review and appraisal of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, 140 Member States responded to a questionnaire distributed

[1] See www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/country/index.html.

in October 2003.[1] All responses were assessed for attention to discrimination and violence against the girl child under the critical area of concern relating to the girl child or in other critical areas of concern.

7. A note verbale was addressed to Member States to invite them to update previously submitted information or to provide the Secretariat with succinct information relating to mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child. Responses were received from 29 Member States.[1]

8. The 141 most recent reports on progress towards achieving the 8 Millennium Development Goals[2] and the 51 most recent full poverty reduction strategy papers and 27 corresponding progress reports[3] were reviewed.

9. In addition, 113 initial and periodic State party reports under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[4] and 146 initial and periodic reports under the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[5] considered by the respective Committees during the period 2001-2006, were included in the review.

II. Mainstreaming attention to discrimination and violence against the girl child in national policies and programmes

10. The right of the girl child to be free from discrimination and the need to protect and promote her rights were recurrent themes in the reports reviewed. While some Member States included specific sections on girls' rights and on discrimination and violence against girls in their reports, attention was mostly focused on discrimination and violence in the context of different thematic areas, in particular health and education.

11. Discrimination against girls was identified by Member States as a causal factor of both inequality in access to and quality of health care, education and economic opportunities, and of violence against girls, including sexual abuse and harmful traditional practices detrimental to their health and well-being. Prevailing negative socio-cultural attitudes and stereotypes were cited as causes of de jure and de facto discrimination against the girl child and violations of the rights of girls.

12. Member States highlighted legislative initiatives as a means to counter discrimination and violence against girls, including enactment and enforcement of anti-discrimination provisions in legislation, and awareness-raising activities and training for legal and other professionals on the legal framework for girls' rights. Initiatives undertaken also included the review of existing policies and programmes

[2] See www.undp.org/mdg/countryreports2.shtml.

[3] See www.worldbank.org/prsp.

[4] Information contained in State party reports considered by the Committee from 2001 to 2006 may contain information pre-dating 2000; see www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reports.htm.

[5] Information contained in State party reports considered by the Committee from 2001 to 2006 may contain information pre-dating 2000. See www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/sessions.htm; reports on the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict were not reviewed.

from a girl child perspective. Some government agencies and line ministries dealing with children incorporated attention to the girl child in policies, programmes and action plans for the promotion and protection of the rights of children.

13. Public awareness-raising by means of media campaigns on the rights of girls were also common strategies. Some Member States undertook the translation and dissemination of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as an awareness-raising measure. Actions were taken to combat discrimination in the media, such as by identifying and addressing gender bias in television and radio; advocating non-sexist content in children's programming; and establishing a dialogue with the media on their role in promoting gender equality.

14. Strategies to address discrimination also encompassed activities to empower girls and create an enabling environment for their increased participation in all social, economic and political spheres. Member States implemented leadership development programmes and peer education for girls, and created "spaces" and opportunities, such as clubs, training centres, cultural programmes and enterprise-development programmes.

A. Education

15. Discrimination and violence against girls in the area of education were highlighted in many reports in relation to, inter alia, inequality in access to education and retention of girls in school at all levels, restricted subject specialization, lack of safety in school environments and persistent gender stereotypes in curricula, teaching materials and methods.

16. Strategies widely reported as effective in increasing access to education and retention of girls in school included legislative measures, the incorporation of a gender perspective into education policies, strategies and action plans, and awareness-raising campaigns. Many Member States also reported on socio-economic infrastructure investments, including transportation; school electrification; separate and adequate sanitation facilities for girls; dormitories for girls; and specific informal education and vocational training institutions for girls. At the community level, access to electricity, potable water and roads were reported as measures that alleviated the work burden of school-age girls and facilitated their enrolment and retention in school. Other activities reported as beneficial to girls' education were the establishment of compulsory and free education, the abolition of school uniforms, flexible school schedules, school canteens, the provision of home rations of food, teaching in local languages and the recruitment of female teachers.

17. Gender stereotypes in curricula, restricted courses of study, class segregation, costs of education, early marriage and pregnancy, and sexual abuse and exploitation of girls in school were identified as hindering the retention and achievements of girls in school. To address gender stereotypes, many Governments introduced or strengthened gender-sensitive curricula and educational materials, gender pedagogy, and the sensitization and training of teachers and administrators. Activities targeting girls included gender-specific career advice, tutorial and mentoring support, counselling programmes and the provision of scholarships and bursaries.

18. The development of specific policies and action plans, and/or the incorporation of a gender perspective in existing policies and plans, were used to eliminate discrimination in the selection of subjects and career choices. Awareness-raising campaigns targeting the public, parents, girls and young women, instructors, teachers and school counsellors were among the measures taken to encourage girls to choose non-traditional courses of study, such as science, engineering and information technology. Other initiatives to increase girls' exposure to non-traditional areas included the organization of "girls' days" in technology-oriented institutions and science and technology competitions, and the provision of scholarships and use of quotas for admission to science and technology programmes. Professional women also mentored adolescent girls in science, engineering and technology to encourage them to take up studies in traditionally male-dominated areas.

19. Attention was given to increasing access to and achievements in education for groups of girls facing specific obstacles, such as rural girls, street girls, refugee girls, girls with disabilities and orphaned girls. Many Member States highlighted the discrimination of rural girls and adolescents in relation to education and training. Efforts to increase access and improve the quality of education for rural girls included scholarship programmes, incentives to lower the cost of school attendance for families, school feeding and infrastructure-development programmes.

20. Some Member States also adopted policies and programmes to promote the retention of pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers in school. Steps were taken to prohibit and punish the denial of entry and forced withdrawal of girls from schools due to pregnancy and marriage.

21. The impact of child labour on girls' education was raised as a critical issue. Some Member States highlighted the economic exploitation of girls, in particular in domestic work — both outside the home and within their own households — as a significant obstacle to their education.

22. Initiatives to promote the practice of sports among girls included developing materials on girls and sports for schools, encouraging educational institutions to establish women's and girls' sports clubs; introducing sport competitions for girls in schools; and including a focus on girls' sports programmes as a criteria for gaining access to government funding.

B. Health

23. Little attention was paid to younger girls in the area of health, compared with the specific attention afforded children in general and the health of adolescent girls. Many poverty reduction strategy papers contained information on child health but few paid explicit attention to girls. While many Member States reported on the implementation of successful child immunization programmes under Millennium Development Goal 4, very few supported that discussion with sex-disaggregated data.

24. Actions taken to eliminate discrimination in the health sector, in particular inequalities in access, included the incorporation of a girl child perspective into national health strategies; research on the correlation between poverty, discrimination and poor nutrition levels and high mortality rates among girls; the

expansion of immunization coverage to girls; and school feeding and physical activity programmes specifically targeting girls. Campaigns to promote better nutrition and programmes offering nutritional supplements, including iron supplement programmes to combat anaemia in adolescent girls, were also reported.

25. Member States reporting on the health of adolescent girls focused on sexual and reproductive health, including the prevention of early and teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections and the reduction of adolescent maternal mortality.

26. Measures reported included the establishment of health centres and hospitals providing sexual and reproductive health services in underserviced areas to promote increased access for adolescent girls. Efforts to promote a multisectoral approach to sexual and reproductive health included establishing governmental inter-agency groups with the participation of relevant line ministries and other bodies. Member States also developed and implemented training in the area of teenage reproductive health for medical professionals and specialists, made contraceptives more widely available, and carried out media campaigns to raise awareness. Efforts to address the maternal mortality rate of adolescent girls included raising the legal age for marriage, providing incentives to delay marriage and working to eliminate female genital mutilation/cutting.

27. To improve girls' access to health information, including that on reproductive and sexual health, health education programmes and campaigns were carried out in primary and secondary schools and in clubs and organizations for girls, such as the girl scouts. Peer educators were also trained to reach other adolescent girls.

28. Some Member States, particularly developed countries, highlighted the fact that adolescent girls and young women suffer more often than adolescent boys and young men from eating disorders, such as anorexia and bulimia. To address substance abuse and smoking, research and surveys on the prevalence of such abuse among girls, and media campaigns and other forms of sensitization of girls, were conducted.

C. Violence against the girl child, including trafficking

29. When reporting on violence, the specific situation of girls was often hidden behind references to "women and girls", "boys and girls" and to "children" in general. For example, in many reports submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and national Millennium Development Goals reports, discussions on trafficking did not pay attention to the specific situation of girls but referred generally to "trafficking in women and girls". In many reports submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, discussions on the abuse and neglect of children did not give explicit attention to girls, and attention to violence in reports submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women often did not focus specifically on the situation of girls but referred to "violence against women and girls".

30. Specific forms of violence against the girl child were, however, addressed by many Member States, including sexual exploitation, domestic violence, custodial violence and trafficking. The particular vulnerability of specific groups of girls to

violence, including rural, migrant, ethnic minority and refugee girls, was highlighted, inter alia, in the context of trafficking and sexual exploitation.

31. In order to protect girls from violence, legislative initiatives were undertaken and attention to girls incorporated into national action plans, policies and programmes on gender-based violence. Some Member States also developed specific action plans, policies or programmes on violence against girls. Steps taken to strengthen legal frameworks included the review and amendment of existing legislation, the enactment of new laws, efforts to ensure the enforcement of existing laws and the prosecution and adequate punishment of perpetrators of violence, in particular sexual violence and exploitation. Other initiatives included the sensitization of law enforcement officials, legal professionals and judges; increased provision of legal support and access to the judicial system for victims of violence; and the creation of institutional mechanisms to enable women and girls to report on acts of violence and receive any necessary support.

32. Awareness-raising initiatives were undertaken to prevent violence against girls, including information, advocacy and sensitization campaigns at the national and community levels. Training programmes, workshops and seminars targeting, inter alia, the general public, medical and educational professionals, the parents of young girls and community leaders, were among the measures utilized. Other innovative activities included campaigns against sexual harassment in schools — some involving girls in their design and implementation — and the use of public service announcements on television and in cinemas.

33. To protect and support girl victims of violence and girls in situations of high risk, Member States established shelters providing medical, social and psychological care; trained and sensitized medical, legal and law enforcement personnel; set up phone lines offering support and information for victims; increased the number of women in law enforcement; and established gender desks at police stations. Innovative examples of action taken included multisectoral programmes, which integrated psychological counselling, support for rehabilitation and reintegration and public awareness components to increase the visibility of violence against girls. Projects focused on informing girls of the risks of prostitution and trafficking, and other measures taken included the provision of safe spaces for girls who had been sexually exploited.

34. Action against the trafficking of girl children was taken in both countries of origin and countries of destination, and focused primarily on legislation, policies and institutional measures to strengthen the prosecution and punishment of perpetrators and awareness-raising campaigns. Initiatives also included regional cooperation programmes aimed at strengthening efforts to combat cross-border trafficking in girls, and capacity-building programmes, in partnership with international and regional organizations, which included a specific focus on girl children and adolescent girls. Programmes and projects addressed the protection of girl victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation, including their rescue, rehabilitation and reintegration. Other measures reported included research on the causal factors of sexual exploitation of girls, including in the context of trafficking, and the effectiveness of legal protection.

35. Data-collection and research initiatives to assess the prevalence and causes of violence against girls were reported by some Member States as an important component of policy and programme development, monitoring and evaluation.

Studies and surveys were reported on sexual violence, sexual harassment, the abduction of young women and girls and pornographic activities involving girls. Data-collection and research initiatives informed the development of national and regional strategies and action plans to address the needs of girl victims of violence. Research on violence against women from a life cycle perspective was also reported.

36. The abuse, including sexual abuse, of girls working as domestic servants was reported, often in the context of trafficking. Efforts to eliminate the exploitation and abuse of girls in domestic service and in other sectors included integrating girl-specific policies on child labour into national development action plans and adopting specific action plans to protect girls from economic exploitation. Member States made efforts to enact and enforce legislation that ensured the protection of girls' rights, including the establishment of legal minimum ages for employment, and to sensitize employers on the rights of young female workers.

37. The unequal access of girls to education, including non-formal education and training, was reported as linked to increased vulnerability to sexual and commercial exploitation and abuse. Steps taken to address that situation included setting up vocational training centres to improve economic and educational opportunities for girls, and encouraging families to ensure that girls and boys had equal access to school through, inter alia, awareness-raising campaigns on the importance of girls' education and the provision of financial incentives for families.

D. Harmful traditional practices

38. Harmful traditional practices affecting girls, such as son preference, prenatal sex selection, female genital mutilation/cutting, early and forced marriage, early pregnancy and honour crimes were addressed by many Member States in the reporting mechanisms assessed.

39. Legislative measures, including the adoption of, or amendments to, criminal, penal and/or civil codes, were taken by many Member States to combat harmful traditional practices. Steps were also taken to strengthen the enforcement of laws and to ensure that the perpetrators of harmful traditional practices were adequately penalized. Steps were taken in some countries to raise the legal age of marriage and consent and to bring legal definitions of children in line with international standards. National policies, action plans and programmes were adopted and national committees and councils established to coordinate and monitor the implementation of laws and policies prohibiting such practices. Some Member States also supported groups working at the local level, including non-governmental organizations, through funding and capacity-building efforts, including in the context of development cooperation.

40. Member States took specific steps to prohibit the practice of female genital mutilation/cutting in health facilities; train education and health professionals on its harmful effects; and to retrain practitioners and encourage and enable them to seek alternative livelihoods. Promising examples of the impact of such measures included former practitioners joining campaigns to educate communities on the negative effects of the practice, and parents and community elders promoting alternative passage rites.

41. Awareness-raising campaigns were a commonly reported strategy for eliminating harmful traditional practices. Initiatives included information campaigns targeting girls, their families, community elders and leaders, medical and educational professionals, social workers and civil servants; national dialogues to facilitate discussion and increase public awareness; and the establishment of a national day to raise awareness of harmful traditional practices. A wide range of mechanisms were utilized in awareness-raising campaigns, from the mass media to traditional community theatre and puppetry.

42. Other measures taken to eliminate harmful traditional practices included the promotion of girls' increased access to education and the creation of information and support centres for victims or girls at risk, including immigrant girls. Promising approaches included the development of an online database on female genital mutilation/cutting and forced marriages for medical and education professionals and line ministries; the establishment of information and consultation centres targeting refugee women and girls; and the provision of information about female genital mutilation/cutting during asylum interviews.

E. Girls in high-risk situations

43. In all reporting mechanisms, Member States highlighted children in situations of high-risk of discrimination and violence. However, few provided explicit attention to the girl child or reported on specific support for girls exposed to, or victims of, discrimination and violence. For example, while children were often indicated as particularly vulnerable to poverty in poverty reduction strategy papers and national Millennium Development Goal reports, few specific details were provided on the effects of poverty on girls, including adolescent girls. Nearly half of all Member States that reported on orphaned or abandoned children in poverty reduction strategy papers did not focus specifically on the girl child.

44. The groups of girls that did receive explicit attention included pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers, and girls from rural areas, especially in relation to their access to health care, education and training. Girls in ethnic minorities, indigenous girls and disabled girls were also given some specific attention, most often in the context of access to and quality of education and economic opportunities. The situation of internally displaced and refugee girls, as well as of girls in conflict and post-conflict situations and girls in conflict with the law, was also raised.

45. Activities undertaken to respond to the specific needs of girls in vulnerable situations included bilingual and special education programmes, as well as initiatives in the area of health and nutrition. Some Member States provided economic subsidies or scholarships for girls in vulnerable situations, including teenage mothers and indigenous girls. Institutional arrangements for the protection of girls included special housing for orphaned girls, vocational training facilities for disabled girls and separate accommodation for girls in legal custody. Initiatives targeting girls affected by conflict included support for the reintegration of demobilized girls into their communities; health education and awareness-raising programmes for adolescent girls in internally displaced and refugee populations; and studies and projects on girls formerly associated with armed groups and on those abducted during armed conflict.

46. While some specific attention was given to the vulnerability of the girl child to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, including in the context of female genital mutilation/cutting, sexual exploitation and substance abuse, very few Member States reported on projects and programmes which specifically addressed the needs of girls. Initiatives undertaken included campaigns to increase girls' awareness of their sexual and reproductive rights and empowerment programmes to increase their capacity to exercise those rights. Mass media- and community-based public education campaigns were used to combat attitudes and practices detrimental to girls' sexual and reproductive rights. Other strategies to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS to girls included health education campaigns in schools, including peer education; provision of free contraceptives; and free telephone-based information and support hotlines and other information services targeting adolescent girls.

47. When specific attention was given to girls in the context of poverty, the focus was on the vulnerability of girls to poverty, especially girls from rural areas and young mothers, and on the impact of poverty on girls, for example in terms of increased household work burdens, nutritional deficits and food insecurity, and limited access to education. Initiatives taken to ease the burden of poverty on girls and decrease their vulnerability to poverty included physical infrastructure development projects, such as building roads, schools and health-care centres in underserved or remote areas, and the provision of services, including energy and water, to ease girls' household work burdens. Measures taken to shift the burden of the costs of education away from poor families and encourage families to support the education of girls included providing special bursaries, the waiving of school fees for girls and free uniforms and supplies for girls, including take-home food rations.

F. Institutional arrangements

48. Some Member States took action to incorporate a children's rights perspective in budget processes, or to develop specific children's budgets.[6] Efforts to engage girls and boys in the budget processes through children's parliaments and councils were also reported. However, little attention was given to mainstreaming specific attention to the girl child in national or local budget processes. Initiatives to focus attention on girls in budget processes were primarily undertaken within the education sector.

49. Girl-specific resource allocation was reported, in particular for promoting girls' education in rural areas through trust funds, scholarships, bursaries and the offsetting of school fees. In the context of development cooperation targeting of girls reported, focused on the education sector, including by the promotion of girls' rights and ensuring funding for girls' education in the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative.

50. Member States reported on the collection and compilation of statistics disaggregated by sex. Although some of the data provided in the reports assessed were disaggregated by sex, they were not always disaggregated by both sex and age.

[6] Child-focused budgeting involves the analysis of allocation of government expenditure to programmes benefiting children and assessment of the impact of these programmes in addressing the rights and needs of children. Such budget processes can lead to reallocation to more adequately address the rights and needs of children.

Sex-disaggregated data were most commonly provided in the area of education. While data were also provided on health, they were not always disaggregated by sex and age.

51. Some Member States noted that when data were available, they were not always reliable or timely, which limited their capacity to monitor and evaluate the impact of actions taken. As a result, the girl child is frequently invisible in research, policy analysis and programme planning and monitoring. Gender analysis should be based on age-disaggregated statistics, and the analysis of discrimination and violence against children must include sex disaggregation in order to make the situation of the girl child visible.

III. Conclusions and recommendations

52. **While critical issues for eliminating discrimination and violence against the girl child were identified across all reporting mechanisms, not all Member States provided information on concrete steps taken to mainstream attention to the girl child or on efforts to evaluate the impact of such steps. Explicit attention to girls was not reported in policies and programmes in many areas, including in policies and programmes specifically focusing on women or children. The needs and priorities of girls were often invisible behind references to "girls and boys", "children" or "women and girls".**

53. **In reporting under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[7] the specific situation of girls was not always highlighted, and in reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child[8] the situation of girls was often subsumed under references to children.**

54. **Progress has been made in identifying issues of concern to the girl child across all sectors, including in relation to girls in high-risk situations. The analysis is, however, not always translated into concrete steps to address the gaps and challenges identified. In both Millennium Development Goals reports and in poverty reduction strategy papers,[9] the girl child was often taken into account in situational analyses. There was not, however, always sufficient information on the extent to which the analysis was incorporated into planned or implemented policies and programmes. Similar findings can be seen in the**

[7] For the latest reporting guidelines of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, see HRI/GEN/2/Rev.3. Article 10 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women refers to education. Several general recommendations of the Committee are pertinent, including general recommendations 9 (1989) on statistics, 14 (1990) on female circumcision, 15 (1990) on women and AIDS, 19 (1992) on violence against women, 21 (1994) on equality in marriage and family relations, and 24 (1999) on women and health.

[8] For the latest reporting guidelines of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, see HRI/GEN/2/Rev.3. Several of the Committee's general comments are also pertinent, specifically general comments 1 (2001) on the aims of education, 3 (2003) on HIV/AIDS and the rights of the child, 4 (2003) on adolescent health, 6 (2005) on treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin, and 7/Rev.1 (2006) on implementing child rights in early childhood.

[9] See www.worldbank.org/prsp for information on guidance provided for the preparation of poverty reduction strategy papers, including on core techniques, sectoral issues and cross-cutting themes, such as gender equality.

responses to the 10-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action; consistent information on the ways and means of incorporating attention to the girl child as an integral part of existing policies, resource allocations and programmes and projects was not always provided.

55. **Member States reported on multiple measures to address discrimination and violence against girls, and some focused on multisectoral approaches as a strategy to address gaps and challenges in education, health, poverty reduction and other areas. Girls' education received the most explicit attention in all reporting mechanisms, as a cross-cutting issue in many sectors/issues, such as adolescent health, harmful traditional practices, economic and sexual exploitation, violence and poverty.**

56. **The most commonly reported measures to address discrimination and violence against the girl child were legislative ones, including efforts to strengthen and enforce existing legislation, and actions to incorporate attention to girls in existing policies, strategies and action plans. Some Member States developed institutional mechanisms, such as national commissions and advisory bodies, to support increased attention to girls, and/or incorporated the attention of the girl child into the work of line ministries and other bodies. Constraints reported in such efforts included lack of resources, institutional capacity, data and coordination. There was little discussion of the accountability mechanisms established to monitor the implementation of those mandates.**

57. **Advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns remained an important strategy for increasing attention to discrimination and violence against the girl child, including in schools and communities and through the media. Use was made of existing institutions and mechanisms — for example, health centres, schools and youth organizations — to reach girls. In some cases, new "spaces" to support girls' empowerment were created, such as girls' clubs and centres. Capacity-building and training on the rights of girls and discrimination and violence was a broadly used strategy in all sectors and covered a wide range of actors and stakeholders. There was little specific attention to the need to engage boys actively in efforts to eliminate discrimination and violence against girls and to empower girls.**

58. **Lack of discussion of efforts to monitor and evaluate actions taken limits the potential to assess progress and identify lessons learned and good practices, as well as the gaps and challenges that need to be addressed. The lack of sex-disaggregated data hindered efforts to make the situation of the girl child more visible in national policy and programme development processes, including those focusing specifically on gender equality, the empowerment of women and the elimination of discrimination and violence against children.**

59. **Specific policies, strategies, action plans, programmes and projects on critical issues affecting the girl child, to complement mainstreaming efforts, were also commonly reported.**

60. **The Commission on the Status of Women may wish to encourage Governments, international organizations including the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders, as appropriate, to:**

(a) Incorporate explicit attention to the situation of girls into the development and implementation of policies and programmes in all areas, including HIV/AIDS, health (including reproductive health), urban and rural planning, immigration, poverty reduction, post-conflict reconstruction and humanitarian relief, to ensure that the needs and priorities of girls, especially girls in high-risk situations, are identified and addressed;

(b) Mainstream attention to the girl child into all policies and programmes aimed at promoting gender equality, the empowerment of women and the elimination of discrimination and violence against children, and systematically document and disseminate lessons learned and good practices;

(c) Ensure that gender analysis and analyses of the situation of children systematically include explicit attention to the girl child and utilize statistics disaggregated by age and sex in order to make discrimination and violence against the girl child more visible;

(d) Increase efforts to mainstream attention to girls in high-risk situations in policy development, planning and resource allocation in all sectors, to more adequately identify and address the specific forms of discrimination and violence they face;

(e) Strengthen monitoring and evaluation of efforts to mainstream attention to the girl child in all sectors, and compile and disseminate lessons learned and good practices, as well as identify gaps, and challenges and strategies to address them;

(f) Utilize gender impact assessments as part of monitoring and evaluation to assess the extent to which policies and programmes actively promote and protect the rights of girls and address discrimination and violence against girls;

(g) Ensure that quantitative and qualitative sex and age disaggregated data are collected, analysed and disseminated to inform policy development and planning and enable effective monitoring of discrimination and violence against the girl child;

(h) Review the indicators for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals to ensure, wherever possible, disaggregation by sex and age;

(i) Undertake specific research on the girl child, including girls in high-risk situations, and integrate the findings, as appropriate, into the formulation of policies and programmes in all sectors;

(j) Develop and/or strengthen accountability mechanisms to ensure that actors at different levels are held responsible for taking the situation of girls, particularly girls at high risk of discrimination and violence, into account in policy development, planning and resource allocation in all sectors;

(k) Ensure the integration of a girl child perspective in all training courses, including courses specifically focusing on gender equality and on the situation of children, and systematically assess the effectiveness of the training;

(l) Ensure that child- and gender-sensitive budgeting frameworks specifically include attention to the girl child, including through the active participation of girls;

(m) Strengthen attention to girls, particularly girls in high-risk situations, in development cooperation programmes;

(n) Develop specific guidance on ways to ensure increased attention to girls and their rights, needs and priorities, including in particular girls in high-risk situations, in the preparation of poverty reduction strategy papers and national Millennium Development Goals reports;

(o) Facilitate the participation of girls of all age groups, as appropriate, in all matters that affect them, including in relation to the development and implementation of policies and programmes and in consultative processes for the preparation of reports under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

(p) Encourage and support, as appropriate, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, in particular youth organizations, in their efforts to mainstream attention to discrimination and violence against girls;

(q) Develop or strengthen policies and adequately resourced programmes focused specifically on the girl child, to complement the efforts to mainstream attention to girls in existing policies and programmes.

61. The Commission on the Status of Women may wish to encourage the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to:

(a) Invite States parties to ensure that their reports explicitly address efforts to mainstream attention to the girl child;

(b) Ensure that the lists of issues and questions, prepared by the Committees as part of their consideration of reports of States parties, explicitly request information on progress in mainstreaming attention to the girl child in all sectors;

(c) Provide specific guidance to States parties on mainstreaming attention to the girl child in all sector areas in concluding comments/observations;

(d) Develop a joint general recommendation on the girl child that gives specific attention to mainstreaming attention to the girl child in existing policies, resource allocation and programmes.